Suggested Grades: Kinder-1st

IT'S ALIVE! *Scavenger Hunt*

Wildlife Champions at Home Science Experiment

K-LS1-1. *Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.*

Is it alive?

Living things are all around us, along with many things that are not living. Sometimes it can be tricky to figure out if something is living or non-living. A bird in a tree is living, but if I see a bird on my phone, is my phone living? No, your phone is not living, but how do you know? A special kind of scientist, called a biologist, studies living things and uses four simple rules to help determine if something is living or non-living.

The first rule is living things need energy. You need energy to play and do your schoolwork. A plant needs energy to make new leaves and grow. You, of course, don't have plug yourself into an outlet like you do with your phone. You get energy in a different way. You eat food! The food you eat turns into the energy you need to survive. All plants and animals get energy from their food. Animals eat other animals or plants for food, but plants make their own food from the sun, water and nutrients in the dirt.

The second rule is that living things grow and change. As you get older, you change and grow. You get taller, your hair gets longer and you may even get wrinkles! Seeds grow into trees and gain leaves and flowers or needles and cones. But rocks don't grow or change on their own, so they are non-living.

The third rule is that living things must be able to reproduce or make more of themselves. For animals, that means having babies that will grow up to become adult animals. Plants reproduce by making seeds that can grow into new plants.

Lastly, living things respond to the world around them. If something changes in the environment, a living thing will change too! If you were to go outside on a chilly day without a coat, your body would respond to the cold by shivering or giving you goosebumps. You are responding to the world around you. Trees respond to the cooling temperatures in the fall by dropping their leaves to prepare for the winter. A tricky thing about those brown leaves that fall to the ground is even though they are no longer alive, they were part of a living thing and considered to be a living thing even after they have fallen off of a tree. Test your knowledge of living and non-living things by going outside with the datasheet below!

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Directions

Take a walk in your neighborhood and decide if the items on the list are living things or not.

Materials: Datasheet and pencil

Step 1. Print out the datasheet and grab a pencil, a friend or an adult. If you are unable to print the datasheet, copy the list to a piece of paper to kept track of items.

Step 2. Take a walk around your neighborhood and try to find the items on the list. For each one, decide whether it is living or non-living by putting an X in the correct box.

Remember the four rules; all living things must pass:

1. Does it need energy?
2. Does it grow and change?
3. Does it reproduce?
4. Does it respond to the world around it?

Step 3. Have fun, and take time to think about the reflection questions.

Reflection

1. How many living things did you find on your walk?
2. How many non-living things did you find?
3. How might your neighborhood be different if there were fewer living things?

Helpful Links

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy60BqCnTG4

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SCAVENGER HUNT DATASHEET

Living and non-living things in your neighborhood

Take a walk around your neighborhood, trying to find the items on the list. Decide whether it is living or non-living by putting an X in the correct box. Remember the four rules all living things must pass:

1. **Does it need energy?**
2. **Does it grow and change?**
3. **Does it reproduce?**
4. **Does it respond to the world around it?**

Item	*Living*	*Non-living*
Rock 		
Leaf on a tree 		
Cat 		
Bird 		
Earthworm 		
Stick 		
Leaf on the ground 		
Pinecone 		
Car 		
Bird feeder 		
Bird seed 		
Dirt 		

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Nature at Home